

the repression of Iraqi citizens under the terms of U.N. Security Council Resolution 688 enacted on April 1, 1991. The most recently available Human Rights Report issued by our State Department calls the human rights situation in Iraq "abysmal". Just a short excerpt from that report makes the case that conditions of Resolution 688 have not been met:

Political power in Iraq is concentrated in a repressive one-party apparatus dominated by Saddam Hussein. . . . Systematic violations continued in all categories, including mass executions of political opponents, widespread use of torture, extreme repression of ethnic groups, disappearances, denial of due process, and arbitrary detention.

Mr. President, I certainly do not wish more hardships on the Iraqi people beyond those they have already suffered at the hands of Saddam Hussein. But softening the pressure against his regime, while so many examples of outrageous and dangerous activities continue to confront us, makes no sense. Certainly reducing the pressure on Iraq now will not hasten the day when the Iraqi people can live free of the deprivations imposed on them by Saddam Hussein.

Even more alarming than a temporary easing of sanctions, however, are suggestions that UNSCOM may recommend lifting the Iraqi embargo entirely sometime this year. How such a recommendation could be contemplated so shortly after UNSCOM itself reported that Iraq continues to lie and hide information about its weapons program is baffling. Further increasing America's dependence on imported oil from a country with Iraq's openly hostile objectives is not in our national interest.

On that point, I should also mention that on March 27 of last year, the Foreign Relations Committee held hearings on the subject of American dependence on foreign oil. Despite repeated findings over many years that the United States' national security is harmed by a dependence on foreign oil, this dependence continues to increase. I commend Chairman HELMS for having held this hearing and recommend that colleagues concerned about our national dependence on foreign oil review the hearing record.

In any case Mr. President, either a temporary easing of sanctions under Resolution 986, or a permanent lifting of sanctions pursuant to earlier Security Council Resolutions, should be accompanied by a full reporting to Congress of the effect on U.S. national security of any Iraqi oil sales, the steps being taken to ensure adequate protection of human rights in Iraq, and the international safeguards in place to protect against future weapons development by Iraq.

CUBAN SHOOT DOWN OF MIAMI-BASED CUBAN EXILE PLANES AND THE CUBAN LIBERTY AND DEMOCRATIC SOLIDARITY—LIBERTAD—ACT CONFERENCE REPORT

Mr. THURMOND. Mr. President, I rise today in strong support of the conference report to H.R. 927, the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act—Libertad. As an original cosponsor of this legislation in the Senate, I have long believed that the United States should strengthen international sanctions against the dictatorial regime of Fidel Castro. I regret that it has taken the most recent outrageous behavior of the Cuban Government to convince the President of this.

Fidel Castro was, is, and always will be a despot and a murderer who has no regard for human life and no respect for international law. The downing of 2 private planes and the killing of 4 civilians by Cuban military fighter aircraft reiterates this fact. It is imperative that Mr. Castro realize that the United States will not tolerate his tyranny. The passage of the Libertad Act will send this vitally important message.

This legislation strengthens international sanctions against Cuba, provides support for a free and independent Cuba, protects the interests of American citizens whose property was confiscated by the Castro regime, and denies visas to individuals who traffic in confiscated property.

I urge all of my colleagues to join me in support of this vital legislation. President Clinton has agreed to sign this act into law. It is time that we send a strong bipartisan message to Fidel Castro.

TRIBUTE TO BRIG. GEN. RICHARD L. REYNARD, STAFF DIRECTOR, SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

Mr. THURMOND. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the contributions of Brig. Gen. Richard L. Reynard, the staff director of the Committee on Armed Services. Dick Reynard, who is well known to many in the Senate and in the Department of Defense, is leaving the committee to return to the private sector.

General Reynard joined the committee as the minority staff director in April 1993. He quickly earned the reputation as a capable leader to whom the Members and staff could turn for clear advice and counsel. His more than 34 years of leadership and management experience in government and the private sector served him and the committee very well.

General Reynard was commissioned in the Army as an artillery officer following graduation from the U.S. Military Academy in June 1958. He served in a wide variety of staff and command assignments at every level of the Army, including a combat tour in Vietnam. General Reynard taught at the

U.S. Military Academy where he helped shape a new generation of leaders for our Nation. Many Members of the Senate remember Dick Reynard from his assignment as the Army's liaison officer to the Senate where he ensured that we understood the Army's priorities and traveled with us as we performed our duties around the world.

Following retirement from the Army, General Reynard worked in the private sector as an officer in a small corporation and as a government relations specialist. When I asked General Reynard to be my staff director, he agreed to return to Government service even though it meant personal and financial sacrifice. During his first year in the committee, we addressed such important issues as the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy concerning the service of gays in the military, force reduction policies and benefits, assignment of women in the military, and Secretary Aspin's reorganization of the Department of Defense. His analysis, advice, and ability to protect the minority points of view resulted in important legislation which enjoyed bipartisan support. Following the elections in November 1994, General Reynard administered the transition of the Armed Services Committee from a Republican minority to the majority. Under his direction, the Armed Services Committee staff was in place and ready to support the committee members when the Congress convened in January 1995.

During his 3 years with the committee, General Reynard earned the reputation as a reliable, steady, and fair person to whom Members and staff could turn when they sought advice or insight on National Security issues. He was a tireless, dedicated, and trusted aide to me. I know many in this Chamber join me in expressing our appreciation to General Reynard and in wishing him and his wife Bibs well in his new endeavors.

Thank you, Mr. President.

UNITED STATES-GERMAN OPEN SKIES AGREEMENT

Mr. PRESSLER. Mr. President, I am delighted to inform the Senate that today the United States and the Federal Republic of Germany signed an open skies agreement which will liberalize air service between our two countries. I am also pleased to advise my colleagues that the United States and Germany initialed a Bilateral Aviation Safety Agreement [BASA] which will greatly enhance safety coordination between the Federal Aviation Administration [FAA] and its German counterpart agency.

The United States-German open skies agreement is a great economic victory for both countries and a very welcome development for consumers. In fact, I regard this agreement to be a trade accord of truly historic proportions for both countries. As always is the case where market forces are unleashed, consumers flying between the